

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A document processing system comprising a terminal device and a document providing device,

said terminal device comprising:

categorizing means for categorizing an electronic document into one of categories according to a characteristic of said electronic document;

communication means for communicating with said document providing device;

specification information input means for specifying an electronic document categorized in one of said categories or specifying one of said categories; and

control means for controlling said communication means so as to transmit, to said document providing device, an electronic document specified by said specification information input means or characteristic information indicating the characteristic of a category specified by said specification information input means,

said document providing device comprising:

a database for storing a plurality of electronic documents;

retrieval means for retrieving a desired electronic document from the electronic documents stored in said database;

communication means for communicating with said terminal device; and

control means for controlling said communication means and said retrieval means such that when said communication means receives said characteristic information, said retrieval means retrieves an electronic document related to said characteristic information from the electronic documents stored in said database, and said communication means transmits information associated with the retrieved electronic document to said terminal device.

2. A document processing system according to Claim 1, wherein said control means of said terminal device transmits an electronic document specified by said specification information input means or characteristic information indicating the characteristic of a category specified by said specification information input means together with an identifier of the specified electronic document or category to said document providing device via said communication means.

3. A document processing system according to Claim 1, wherein said control means of said document providing device transmits an electronic document itself extracted by retrieval, as said information associated with the retrieved

electronic document, to said terminal device via said communication means.

4. A document processing system according to Claim 1, wherein said control means of said document providing device transmits a list of electronic documents extracted by retrieval, as said information associated with the retrieved electronic document, to said terminal device via said communication means.

5. A document processing system according to Claim 4, wherein said terminal device further comprises electronic document specifying means for, when said list is received via said communication means, inputting electronic document specifying information to specify a particular electronic document of those included in said list, and

said control means of said terminal device transmits the electronic document specifying information input via said electronic document specifying means to said document providing device via said communication means.

6. A document processing system according to Claim 5, wherein said control means of said document providing device transmits an electronic document specified by said electronic document specifying information received from

said terminal device to said terminal device via said communication means.

7. A document processing system according to Claim 4, wherein said control means of said document providing device produces said list such that electronic documents retrieved by said retrieval means from said database are all included in said list, and said control means transmits said list to said terminal device via said communication means.

8. A document processing system according to Claim 4, wherein said control means of said document providing device produces said list such that electronic documents retrieved by said retrieval means from said database are partially included in said list, and said control means transmits said list to said terminal device via said communication means.

9. A document processing system according to Claim 4, wherein said control means of said document providing device produces said list such that a full or partial set of electronic documents retrieved by said retrieval means from said database is sorted and the resultant sorted set of electronic documents is included in said list, and said control means transmits said list to said terminal device via said communication means.

10. A document processing system according to Claim 2, wherein said categorizing means temporarily determines a category in which the electronic document received from said document providing device is to be categorized, in accordance with the characteristic of said electronic document,

if said category determined is the same as the category specified by said specification information input means or as the category to which the specified electronic document belongs, said categorizing means categorizes said electronic document received from said document providing device into said category, and

if said category determined is different from the category specified by said specification information input means or from the category to which the specified electronic document belongs, said categorizing means categorizes said electronic document received from said document providing device into a category in accordance with an instruction given by a user.

11. A document processing system according to Claim 1, wherein when said categorizing means categorizes the electronic document received from said document providing device into a category, said categorizing means updates

category information.

12. A document processing system according to Claim 1, wherein said document providing device further comprises accounting means for, when said document providing device transmits the electronic document to said terminal device, performing an accounting process associated with the fee to said terminal device.

13. A terminal device comprising:

categorizing means for categorizing an electronic document into one of categories according to a characteristic of said electronic document;

communication means for communicating with a document providing device;

specification information input means for specifying an electronic document categorized in one of said categories or specifying one of said categories; and

control means for controlling said communication means so as to transmit, to said document providing device, an electronic document specified by said specification information input means or characteristic information indicating the characteristic of a category specified by said specification information input means.

14. A terminal device according to Claim 13, wherein said control means transmits an electronic document specified by said specification information input means or characteristic information indicating the characteristic of a category specified by said specification information input means together with an identifier of the specified electronic document or category to said document providing device via said communication means.

15. A terminal device according to Claim 13, further comprising electronic document specifying means for, when a list of electronic documents retrieved in accordance with said characteristic information is received from said document providing device via said communication means, inputting electronic document specifying information to specify a particular electronic document of those included in said list,

wherein said control means transmits the electronic document specifying information input via said electronic document specifying means to said document providing device via said communication means.

16. A terminal device according to Claim 13, wherein said categorizing means temporarily determines a category in which the electronic document received from said document

providing device is to be categorized, in accordance with the characteristic of said electronic document,

if said category determined is the same as the category specified by said specification information input means or as the category to which the specified electronic document belongs, said categorizing means categorizes said electronic document received from said document providing device into said category, and

if said category determined is different from the category specified by said specification information input means or from the category to which the specified electronic document belongs, said categorizing means categorizes said electronic document received from said document providing device into a category in accordance with an instruction given by a user.

17. A terminal device according to Claim 13, wherein when said categorizing means categorizes the electronic document received from said document providing device into a category, said categorizing means updates category information.

18. A document providing device comprising:
a database for storing a plurality of electronic documents;

retrieval means for retrieving a desired electronic document from the electronic documents stored in said database;

communication means for communicating with a terminal device; and

control means for controlling said communication means and said retrieval means such that when said communication means receives characteristic information from said terminal device, said retrieval means retrieves an electronic document related to said characteristic information from the electronic documents stored in said database, and said communication means transmits information associated with the retrieved electronic document to said terminal device.

19. A document providing device according to Claim 18, wherein said control means transmits an electronic document itself extracted by retrieval, as said information associated with the retrieved electronic document, to said terminal device via said communication means.

20. A document providing device according to Claim 18, wherein said control means transmits a list of electronic documents extracted by retrieval, as said information associated with the retrieved electronic document, to said terminal device via said communication means.

21. A document providing device according to Claim 20, wherein when electronic document specifying information which specifies a particular electronic document of the electronic documents included in said list is received from said terminal device, said control means transmits the electronic document specified by said electronic document specifying information to said terminal device via said communication means.

22. A document providing device according to Claim 20, wherein said control means produces said list such that electronic documents retrieved by said retrieval means from said database are all included in said list, and said control means transmits said list to said terminal device via said communication means.

23. A document providing device according to Claim 20, wherein said control means produces said list such that electronic documents retrieved by said retrieval means from said database are partially included in said list, and said control means transmits said list to said terminal device via said communication means.

24. A document providing device according to Claim 20,

wherein said control means produces said list such that a full or partial set of electronic documents retrieved by said retrieval means from said database is sorted and the resultant sorted set of electronic documents is included in said list, and said control means transmits said list to said terminal device via said communication means.

25. A document providing device according to Claim 18, further comprising accounting means for, when said document providing device transmits the electronic document to said terminal device, performing an accounting process associated with the fee to said terminal device.

26. A document processing method, comprising the steps of:

categorizing electronic documents into a plurality of categories in accordance with the characteristic of the respective electronic documents;

requesting specifying an electronic document categorized in one of said categories or specifying of one of said categories; and

transmitting, to a document providing device, an electronic document or characteristic information indicating the characteristic of a category, specified in response to said request in said requesting step.

27. A document processing method according to Claim 26, wherein in said transmission step, a specified electronic document or characteristic information indicating the characteristic of a specified category is transmitted together with an identifier of the specified electronic document or category to said document providing device.

28. A document processing method according to Claim 26, further comprising the steps of:

requesting, when a list of electronic documents retrieved in accordance with said characteristic information is received from said document providing device, inputting of electronic document specifying information which specifies a particular electronic document of those included in said list; and

transmitting, to said document providing device, the electronic document specifying information input in response to said request.

29. A document processing method according to Claim 26, wherein in said categorizing step, a category, in which the electronic document received from said document providing device is to be categorized, is temporarily determined in accordance with the characteristic of said electronic

document,

if said temporarily-determined category is the same as the category specified in response to said specifying request or as the category to which the specified electronic document belongs, said electronic document received from said document providing device is categorized into said category, and

if said temporarily-determined category is different from the category specified in response to said specifying request or from the category to which the specified electronic document belongs, said electronic document received from said document providing device is categorized into a category in accordance with an instruction given by a user.

30. A document processing method according to Claim 29, wherein in said categorizing step, when the electronic document received from said document providing device is categorized into a category, category information is updated.

31. A document processing method comprising the steps of:

when characteristic information of an electronic document or a category is received, retrieving an electronic document related to said characteristic information from a

plurality of electronic documents stored in a database; and transmitting information associated with the electronic document retrieved in said retrieving step.

32. A document processing method according to Claim 31, wherein in said transmission step, the electronic document itself extracted by retrieval is transmitted, as said information associated with the retrieved electronic document, to said terminal device.

33. A document processing method according to Claim 31, wherein in said transmission step, a list of electronic documents extracted by retrieval is transmitted, as said information associated with the retrieved electronic document, to said terminal device.

34. A document processing method according to Claim 33, wherein in said transmission step, when electronic document specifying information which specifies a particular electronic document of the electronic documents included in said list is received from said terminal device, the electronic document specified by said electronic document specifying information is transmitted to said terminal device.

35. A document processing method according to Claim 33, wherein in said transmission step, said list is produced such that electronic documents retrieved from said database in said retrieving step are all included in said list, and said list is transmitted to said terminal device.

36. A document processing method according to Claim 33, wherein in said transmission step, said list is produced such that electronic documents retrieved from said database in said retrieving step are partially included in said list, and said list is transmitted to said terminal device.

37. A document processing method according to Claim 33, wherein in said transmission step, said list is produced such that a full or partial set of electronic documents retrieved from said database in said retrieving step is sorted and the resultant sorted set of electronic documents is included in said list, and said list is transmitted to said terminal device.

38. A document processing method according to Claim 31, further comprising an accounting step for, when the electronic document is transmitted to said terminal device, performing an accounting process associated with the fee to said terminal device.

39. A storage medium including a computer-controllable operation control program stored thereon, said program comprising the steps of:

categorizing electronic documents into a plurality of categories in accordance with the characteristic of the respective electronic documents;

requesting specifying an electronic document categorized in one of said categories or specifying of one of said categories; and

transmitting, to a document providing device, an electronic document or characteristic information indicating the characteristic of a category, specified in response to said request in said requesting step.

40. A storage medium including a computer-controllable operation control program stored thereon, said program comprising the steps of:

when characteristic information of an electronic document or a category is received, retrieving an electronic document related to said characteristic information from a plurality of electronic documents stored in a database; and

transmitting information associated with the electronic document retrieved in said retrieving step.

41. A document processing system comprising:

a document providing unit for providing an electronic document;

an authoring unit; and

a document server including a database for storing said electronic document and an identifier of said electronic document,

said document providing unit comprising transmission means for transmitting a set of said electronic document and said identifier or only said identifier to said authoring unit,

said authoring unit comprising:

a receiver;

a transmitter;

authoring means for adding to said electronic document a tag indicating the structure of said electronic document thereby producing a tagged electronic document; and

control means for controlling said authoring means, said transmitter and said receiver such that when the set of said electronic document and the identifier or only said identifier is received via said receiver, said control means controls said authoring means, said transmitter and said receiver depending upon the content of the received data so as to store the tagged electronic document associated with the electronic document in the database of said document

server.

42. A document processing system according to Claim 41, wherein when said receiver receives the set of said electronic document and said identifier, said control means controls said authoring means so as to add a tag to said electronic document thereby producing a tagged electronic document and transmits the tagged electronic document to said document server via said transmitter.

43. A document processing system according to Claim 41, wherein when said receiver receives only said identifier, said control means determines whether a tagged electronic document indicated by the received identifier is stored in said database, and if said tagged electronic document is stored in said database, said controller transmits to said document providing unit data indicating that the tagged electronic document corresponding to said identifier is already present in said database.

44. A document processing system according to Claim 41, wherein when said receiver receives only said identifier, said control means determines whether an electronic document or a tagged electronic document indicated by the received identifier is stored in said database, and if neither is

stored in said database, said controller transmits data via said transmitter to said document providing unit to request transmission of the electronic document indicated by said identifier.

45. A document processing system according to Claim 41, wherein when said receiver receives only said identifier, said control means determines whether an electronic document indicated by the received identifier is stored in said database, and if said electronic document is stored in said database, said controller transmits data via said transmitter to said document server to request transmission of the electronic document indicated by said identifier.

46. A document processing system according to Claim 41, wherein said authoring unit further comprises accounting means for, when said authoring means has performed an authoring process, performing an accounting process associated with the fee to said document providing unit.

47. An authoring apparatus comprising:

a receiver;

a transmitter;

authoring means for adding to said electronic document a tag indicating the structure of said electronic document

thereby producing a tagged electronic document; and

control means for controlling said authoring means, said transmitter and said receiver in such a manner that when a set of an electronic document and an associated identifier or only an identifier is received via said receiver, said control means controls said authoring means, said transmitter and said receiver depending upon the content of the received data such that a tagged electronic document associated with said electronic document is transmitted via said transmitter to a document server having a database and said tagged electronic document is stored in said database.

48. A authoring apparatus according to Claim 47, wherein when said receiver receives the set of said electronic document and said identifier, said control means controls said authoring means so as to add a tag to said electronic document thereby producing a tagged electronic document and transmits the tagged electronic document to said document server via said transmitter.

49. A authoring apparatus according to Claim 47, wherein when said receiver receives only said identifier, said control means determines whether a tagged electronic document indicated by the received identifier is stored in

said database, and if said tagged electronic document is stored in said database, said controller transmits to said document providing unit data indicating that the tagged electronic document corresponding to said identifier is already present in said database.

50. A authoring apparatus according to Claim 47, wherein when said receiver receives only said identifier, said control means determines whether an electronic document or a tagged electronic document indicated by the received identifier is stored in said database, and if neither is stored in said database, said controller transmits data via said transmitter to said document providing unit to request transmission of the electronic document indicated by said identifier.

51. A authoring apparatus according to Claim 47, wherein when said receiver receives only said identifier, said control means determines whether an electronic document indicated by the received identifier is stored in said database, and if said electronic document is stored in said database, said controller transmits data via said transmitter to said document server to request transmission of the electronic document indicated by said identifier.

52. A authoring apparatus according to Claim 47, wherein said authoring unit further comprises accounting means for, when said authoring means has performed an authoring process, performing an accounting process associated with the fee to said document providing unit.

53. A document processing method for a document processing system comprising a document providing unit for providing an electronic document, an authoring unit, and a document server including a database for storing said electronic document and an identifier of said electronic document, said method comprising the steps of:

transmitting a set of said electronic document and said identifier or only said identifier to said authoring unit from said document providing unit;

when the set of said electronic document and the identifier or only said identifier is transmitted to said authoring unit in said transmission step, performing, in said authoring unit, an authoring process depending upon the content of the data transmitted to said authoring unit such that a tagged electronic document associated with said electronic document is stored in the database of said document server.

54. A document processing method according to Claim 53,

wherein when a set of said electronic document and said identifier is transmitted to said authoring unit in said transmission step, said authoring step adds a tag to said received electronic document thereby producing a tagged electronic document and transmits the produced tagged electronic document to said document server.

55. A document processing method according to Claim 53, wherein when only said identifier is transmitted to said authoring unit in said transmission step, said authoring step determines whether a tagged electronic document indicated by the received identifier is stored in said database, and if said tagged electronic document is stored in said database, data indicating that the tagged electronic document corresponding to said identifier is already present in said database is transmitted to said document providing unit.

56. A document processing method according to Claim 53, wherein when only said identifier is transmitted to said authoring unit in said transmission step, said authoring step determines whether an electronic document or a tagged electronic document indicated by the received identifier is stored in said database, and if neither is stored in said database, data is transmitted to said document providing

unit to request transmission of the electronic document indicated by said identifier.

57. A document processing method according to Claim 53, wherein when only said identifier is transmitted to said authoring unit in said transmission step, said authoring step determines whether an electronic document indicated by the received identifier is stored in said database, and if said electronic document is stored in said database, data is transmitted to said document server to request transmission of said electronic document indicated by said identifier.

58. A document processing method according to Claim 53, further comprising the step of, when said authoring step has performed the authoring process and the tagged electronic document associated with the electronic document of interest has been stored in the database of said document server, performing an accounting process associated with the fee to said document providing unit.

59. A storage medium including a computer-controllable program stored thereon, said program comprising the steps of:

adding to an electronic document a tag indicating the structure of said electronic document thereby producing a

tagged electronic document; and

when a set of an electronic document and an associated identifier or only an identifier is received from a document providing unit, performing an authoring process depending upon the content of the received data such that a tagged electronic document associated with the electronic document is transmitted to a document server having a database and said tagged electronic document is stored in said database.

60. A document processing system comprising a user terminal, an authoring unit for producing a tagged electronic document by adding to an electronic document a tag indicating the structure of said electronic document, and a service providing unit including a database for storing an electronic document or a tagged electronic document,

said user terminal comprising:

a transmitter;

control means for transmitting, to said service providing unit via said transmitter, specification information specifying an electronic document and request information indicating a request for a tagged electronic document including a tag indicating the structure of the electronic document specified by said request information; and

a receiver for receiving the tagged electronic document transmitted from said service providing unit;

said service providing unit comprising:

a receiver;

a transmitter;

data presence detecting means for determining, when said receiver receives said request information, whether said database includes said tagged electronic document of the electronic document specified by said specification information; and

control means for, when said data presence detecting means has determined that said database includes said tagged electronic document of the electronic document specified by said specification information, reading said tagged electronic document from said database and transmitting it to said user terminal via the transmitter.

61. A document processing system according to Claim 60, wherein when said data presence detecting means determines that said database includes the electronic document specified by said specification information, the control means of said service providing unit requests via said transmitter said authoring unit to produce a tagged electronic document of said electronic document, and when said tagged electronic document is received from said

authoring unit via said receiver, said control means of said service providing unit transmits said tagged electronic document to said user terminal via said transmitter.

62. A document processing system according to Claim 60, wherein when said data presence detecting means determines that said database includes neither the electronic document specified by said specification information nor the tagged electronic document of said electronic document, said control means of said service providing unit transmits an error notification to said user terminal via said transmitter.

63. A document processing system according to Claim 60, wherein said database includes electronic documents or tagged electronic documents together with their associated identifiers, and

said control means of said user terminal transmits said identifier as said specification information specifying an electronic document to said service providing unit via said transmitter.

64. A document processing apparatus according to Claim 60, wherein said control means of said user terminal transmits a keyword included in an electronic document as

said specification information specifying an electronic document to said service providing unit via said transmitter, and

said data presence detecting means determines whether said database includes an electronic document or a tagged electronic document including said keyword.

65. A document processing system according to Claim 60, wherein said control means of said user terminal is capable of transmitting an electronic document together with said request information to said service providing unit via said transmitter, and

said control means of said service providing unit requests via said transmitter said authoring unit to produce an tagged electronic document of said electronic document received via said receiver, and when the tagged electronic document is received from said authoring unit via said receiver, said control means of said service providing unit transmits said tagged electronic document to said user terminal via said transmitter.

66. A document processing system according to Claim 65, wherein said control means of said user terminal transmits, as said specification information specifying an electronic document, an identifier indicating an electronic document

transmitted to said service providing unit from said user terminal, to said terminal providing unit via said transmitter.

67. A document processing apparatus according to Claim 60, wherein said service providing unit further comprises accounting means for, when said service providing unit transmits the tagged electronic document to said user terminal, performing an accounting process associated with the fee to said user terminal.

68. A document processing apparatus according to Claim 60, wherein said service providing unit further comprises accounting means for, when said service providing unit transmits the tagged electronic document to said user terminal, performing an accounting process associated with the fee to said user terminal, and

when said tagged electronic document is transmitted, said accounting means charges to said user terminal the fee depending upon whether said authoring unit has performed an authoring process associated with said tagged electronic document.

69. A document processing apparatus according to Claim 60, wherein said database includes, together with said

electronic documents, authoring permission/prohibition information indicating whether authoring of the respective electronic documents is permitted or prohibited.

70. A terminal device comprising:

a transmitter for transmitting information to a service providing device;

control means for transmitting, to said service providing device via said transmitter, specification information specifying an electronic document and request information indicating a request for a tagged electronic document including a tag indicating the structure of the electronic document specified by said request information; and

a receiver for receiving the tagged electronic document which is transmitted from said service providing device in response to said request information and said specification information.

71. A terminal device according to Claim 70, wherein said control means transmits an identifier of an electronic document as said specification information specifying an electronic document to said service providing unit via said transmitter.

72. A terminal device according to Claim 70, wherein said control means transmits a keyword included in an electronic document as said specification information specifying an electronic document to said service providing unit via said transmitter.

73. A terminal device according to Claim 70, wherein said control means is capable of transmitting an electronic document together with said request information to said service providing device via said transmitter.

74. A terminal device according to Claim 73, wherein said control means transmits, as said specification information specifying an electronic document, an identifier indicating an electronic document transmitted to said service providing device to said terminal providing device via said transmitter.

75. A service providing device comprising:

a database for storing electronic documents or tagged electronic documents;

a receiver for receiving, from a terminal device, specification information specifying an electronic document and request information indicating a request for a tagged electronic document including a tag indicating the structure

of the electronic document specified by said request information;

a transmitter;

data presence detecting means for determining, when said receiver receives said request information, whether said database includes said tagged electronic document of the electronic document specified by said specification information; and

control means for, when said data presence detecting means has determined that said database includes said tagged electronic document of the electronic document specified by said specification information, reading said tagged electronic document from said database and transmitting it to said terminal device via the transmitter.

76. A service providing device according to Claim 75, wherein

said transmitter and said receiver are capable of transmitting and receiving information to and from an authoring device, and

when said data presence detecting means determines that said database includes the electronic document specified by said specification information, said control means requests via said transmitter said authoring device to produce a tagged electronic document of said electronic document, and

when said tagged electronic document is received from said authoring device via said receiver, said control means transmits said tagged electronic document to said terminal device via said transmitter.

77. A service providing device according to Claim 75, wherein when said data presence detecting means determines that said database includes neither the electronic document specified by said specification information nor the tagged electronic document of said electronic document, said control means transmits an error notification to said terminal device via said transmitter.

78. A service providing device according to Claim 75, wherein said database includes electronic documents or tagged electronic documents together with their associated identifiers, and

said data presence detecting means determines whether said database includes an electronic document or a tagged electronic document in accordance with an identifier transmitted as said specification information.

79. A service providing device according to Claim 75, wherein said data presence detecting means determines whether said database includes an electronic document or a

tagged electronic document in accordance with a keyword transmitted as said specification information.

80. A service providing device according to Claim 75, wherein said transmitter and said receiver are capable of transmitting and receiving information to and from an authoring device, and

said control means requests via said transmitter said authoring device to produce an tagged electronic document of an electronic document received from said terminal device via said receiver, and when the tagged electronic document is received from said authoring device via said receiver, said control means transmits said tagged electronic document to said terminal device via said transmitter.

81. A service providing device according to Claim 75, further comprising accounting means for, when said tagged electronic document is transmitted to said terminal device, performing an accounting process associated with the fee to said terminal device.

82. A service providing device according to Claim 75, further comprising accounting means for, when said tagged electronic document is transmitted to said terminal device, performing an accounting process associated with the fee to

said terminal device, wherein when said tagged electronic document is transmitted, said accounting means charges to said terminal device the fee depending upon whether said authoring unit has performed an authoring process associated with said tagged electronic document.

83. A service providing device according to Claim 75, wherein said database includes, together with said electronic documents, authoring permission/prohibition information indicating whether authoring of the respective electronic documents is permitted or prohibited.

84. A document processing method comprising the steps of:

setting specification information to specify an electronic document;

transmitting, to a service providing device, specification information set in said specification information setting step and request information indicating a request for a tagged electronic document including a tag indicating the structure of the electronic document specified by said request information; and

receiving the tagged electronic document which is transmitted from said service providing device in response to said request information and said specification

information.

85. A document processing method according to Claim 84, wherein in said specification information setting step, said specification information is set using an identifier of an electronic document.

86. A document processing method according to Claim 84, wherein in said specification information setting step, said specification information is set using a keyword included in an electronic document.

87. A document processing method according to Claim 84, wherein in said transmission step, an electronic document is transmitted together with said request information to said service providing device.

88. A document processing method according to Claim 87, wherein in said specification information setting step, said specification information is set using an identifier indicating an electronic document to be transmitted to said service providing device.

89. A document processing method comprising the steps of:

receiving, from a terminal device, specification information specifying an electronic document and request information indicating a request for a tagged electronic document including a tag indicating the structure of the electronic document specified by said request information;

determining whether a database includes said tagged electronic document of the electronic document specified by said specification information received in said receiving step; and

when it is determined in said determining step that said database includes said tagged electronic document of the electronic document specified by said specification information, reading said tagged electronic document from said database and transmitting it to said terminal device.

90. A document processing method according to Claim 89, further comprising the steps of:

when it is determined in said determining step that said database includes the electronic document specified by said specification information, requesting an authoring device to produce a tagged electronic document of said electronic document; and

when said tagged electronic document is received from said authoring unit, transmitting said tagged electronic document to said terminal device.

91. A document processing method according to Claim 89, further comprising the step of, when it is determined in said determining step that said database includes neither the electronic document specified by said specification information nor the tagged electronic document of said electronic document, transmitting an error notification to said terminal device.

92. A document processing method according to Claim 89, wherein

said database includes electronic documents or tagged electronic documents together with their associated identifiers,

in said determining step, it is determined whether said database includes an electronic document or a tagged electronic document in accordance with an identifier received as said specification information.

93. A document processing method according to Claim 89, wherein in said determining step, it is determined whether said database includes an electronic document or a tagged electronic document in accordance with a keyword received as said specification information.

94. A document processing method according to Claim 89, further comprising the steps of:

when an electronic document is received, in said receiving step, from said terminal device, requesting an authoring device to produce a tagged electronic document of said electronic document; and

when said tagged electronic document is received from said authoring unit, transmitting said tagged electronic document to said terminal device.

95. A document processing method according to Claim 89, further comprising the step of, when said tagged electronic document is transmitted to said terminal device, performing an accounting process associated with the fee to said terminal device.

96. A document processing method according to Claim 89, further comprising the step of, when said tagged electronic document is transmitted, performing an accounting process associated with the fee to said terminal device depending upon whether said authoring unit has performed an authoring process associated with said tagged electronic document.

97. A document processing method according to Claim 89, wherein

said database includes, together with said electronic documents, authoring permission/prohibition information indicating whether authoring of the respective electronic documents is permitted or prohibited, and

in said determining step, said authoring permission/prohibition information is used to determine whether an electronic document is included in said database.

98. A storage medium including a computer-controllable program stored thereon, said program comprising the steps of:

setting specification information to specify an electronic document;

transmitting, to a service providing device, specification information set in said specification information setting step and request information indicating a request for a tagged electronic document including a tag indicating the structure of the electronic document specified by said request information; and

receiving the tagged electronic document which is transmitted from said service providing device in response to said request information and said specification information.

99. A storage medium including a computer-controllable

program stored thereon, said program comprising the steps of:

receiving, from a terminal device, specification information specifying an electronic document and request information indicating a request for a tagged electronic document including a tag indicating the structure of the electronic document specified by said request information;

determining whether a database includes said tagged electronic document of the electronic document specified by said specification information received in said receiving step; and

when it is determined in said determining step that said database includes said tagged electronic document of the electronic document specified by said specification information, reading said tagged electronic document from said database and transmitting it to said terminal device.

1. A method of processing a request for a tagged electronic document, comprising the steps of:
2. receiving, from a terminal device, specification information specifying an electronic document and request information indicating a request for a tagged electronic document including a tag indicating the structure of the electronic document specified by said request information;
3. determining whether a database includes said tagged electronic document of the electronic document specified by said specification information received in said receiving step; and
4. when it is determined in said determining step that said database includes said tagged electronic document of the electronic document specified by said specification information, reading said tagged electronic document from said database and transmitting it to said terminal device.